

Exemplars scored with the Holistic Rubric Based on 6 Traits of Writing.

Prompt: Set 1

Writing

DIRECTIONS:

Read the writing prompt below. Use the space on this page for your prewriting activity. Then write your first draft on the following two pages.

The President of the United States is coming to visit your school. He has been told that your school is very special and he wants to know why.

Write the body of a letter to the President to explain what makes your school so special.

Your letter should:

- **Target a specific audience and purpose.**
- **Organize clear ideas into meaningful sequence.**
- **Be in appropriate business letter form.**

Remember to edit for spelling, grammar, punctuation, and capitalization.

AIMS Writing is a summative test of writing that is scored holistically. The prompt is revealed only at the time of testing. The student responses are produced in one sitting without any outside assistance during the writing process. Other than consulting a dictionary or a thesaurus, the student is writing entirely on his or her own. The AIMS score offers a snapshot of how well the student writes to the cold prompt on that day. Students who have the opportunity to write often in many different settings will better demonstrate the skills they have learned when they respond to the AIMS prompt.

The holistic rubric used for scoring AIMS Writing is based on the 6 Traits of Writing used as a teaching tool in Arizona classrooms. Strand 2 of the Academic Writing Standard is also based on the 6 Traits of Writing. In the classroom, teachers can focus on one or more traits according to their lesson plans, score writing for individual trait(s), and offer constructive feedback on the trait(s) to each student. Teaching writing at any level requires specific feedback, and using the 6 Traits of Writing is an excellent way to assist students in recognizing their strengths and weaknesses throughout the school year.

Scoring for AIMS with the holistic rubric emphasizes the traits that are most important for recognizing good writing. Ideas, content development, and organization are the heart of any piece of writing. Without clear, focused ideas developed logically with supporting details, a paper will not communicate the intended message. Voice, word choice, and fluency are the next most important elements of a written response. With appropriate vocabulary and the crafting of sentences, the writer can enhance ideas and connect with his or her audience, whether formally or informally. Conventions are also important, but even with good skills in conventions, a response will not communicate well without the other qualities.

Each of the following papers is assigned a score from 1 to 6. A score point 1 paper is inferior, a score point 2 paper is poor, a score point 3 paper is inadequate, a score point 4 paper is appropriate and acceptable, a score point 5 paper is excellent and skillful, and a score point 6 paper is sophisticated and skillful. Perfect papers do not exist; therefore, even those that score 5 or 6 will have some errors.

HOLISTIC RUBRIC BASED ON 6 TRAITS OF WRITING

<p>SCORE POINT 6</p> <p>Response is sophisticated and skillful in written communication, demonstrated by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • exceptional clarity, focus, and control in topic development and organization that often show insight. • in-depth and/or creative exploration of the topic using rich, relevant, and credible details. • a strong, perhaps creative, beginning and a satisfying conclusion. • specifically and carefully chosen words that are skillfully crafted into phrases and sentences that enhance meaning. • intentional and committed interaction between the writer and the reader. • effective and/or creative use of a wide range of conventions with few errors. 	<p>SCORE POINT 5</p> <p>Response is excellent and skillful in written communication, demonstrated by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clarity, focus, and control in topic development and organization. • a balanced and thorough exploration of the topic using relevant details. • an inviting beginning and a satisfying sense of closure. • a broad range of carefully chosen words crafted into phrases and varied sentences that sound natural. • awareness of the reader and commitment to the audience and topic. • effective use of a wide range of conventions with few errors. 	<p>SCORE POINT 4</p> <p>Response is appropriate and acceptable in written communication, demonstrated by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ideas adequately developed with a clear and coherent presentation of ideas with order and structure that can be formulaic. • relevant details that are sometimes general or limited; organization that is clear, but sometimes predictable. • a recognizable beginning and ending, although one or both may be somewhat weak. • effective word choice that is functional and, at times, shows interaction between writer and audience. • somewhat varied sentence structure with good control of simple constructions; a natural sound. • control of standard conventions although a wide range is not used; errors that do not impede readability.
<p>SCORE POINT 3</p> <p>Response is inadequate in written communication, demonstrated by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • broad or simplistic ideas that are understood but often ineffective. • attempts at organizing that are inconsistent or ineffective; beginnings and endings that are underdeveloped; repetitive transitional devices. • developmental details that are uneven, somewhat predictable or leave information gaps; details are not always placed effectively in the writing. • reliance on clichés and overused words that do not connect with the reader; limited audience awareness. • monotonous and sometimes misused words; sentences that may sound mechanical, although simple constructions are usually correct. • limited control of standard conventions with significant errors. 	<p>SCORE POINT 2</p> <p>Response is poor in written communication, demonstrated by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • overly simplistic and sometimes unclear ideas that have insufficiently developed details • sequencing of ideas that is often just a list; missing or ineffective details that require reader inference to comprehend and follow. • missing beginning and/or ending. • repetitive, monotonous, and often misused words are awkwardly strung into sentences that are difficult to read because they are either choppy or rambling; most sentences begin with repetitive noun + verb. • lack of audience awareness. • little control of basic conventions resulting in errors impeding readability. 	<p>SCORE POINT 1</p> <p>Response is inferior in written communication, demonstrated by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lack of purpose or ideas and sequencing. • organization that obscures the main point. • an attempt that is too short to offer coherent development of an idea, if it is stated. • extremely limited vocabulary that shows no commitment to communicating a message. • sentences with confusing word order that may not permit oral reading. • severe and frequent errors in conventions.

Are school is the bus he went to no how many kid are in are school.

The writing does not include clear ideas or a purpose. Organization is not demonstrated. Vocabulary is limited and the one sentence does not communicate a message. There are frequent and severe errors in conventions. The paper is too short to demonstrate writing skills.

The response is not a 2 because it does not include ideas or a purpose.

Dear Mr. President . Are school
is good becouse are teach are very mean.
But are pressubol is nice to us. We trix to
do stuff but the teach do not let us. We
trix to do stuff. But are pressubol lets us. so
thats whx we are a verx special school

The response has overly simplistic ideas (mean teachers, nice principal) that are not developed. Repetitive words and sentences are monotonous: "We try to do stuff" "But are pressubol" There is a lack of audience awareness and very little control of conventions.

The response is not a 1 because the writing communicates simple ideas. The response is not a 3 because details are not developed.

Dear Mr. President,
Are school is special in many ways. The first
thing is, we have great teachers. They are all
so nice. Second thing is, we have great kids
too, we all like to help out. The last thing is,
we have a great pinciple. She is the one that
makes are school special.

From
A

The response has broad ideas that are understood, but the developmental details are predictable: “Are school is special in many ways.” “We have great teachers.” Organizational devices are repetitive: “The first thing is,” “The second thing is,” “The last thing is.” The beginning is recognizable. Monotonous words (many, thing, nice, great) and sentences (“we have”) create a mechanical sound to the paper. There is limited control of conventions.

The writing is not a 2 because it contains developmental details. The response is not a 4 because overused words do not connect with the reader and give the sentences a mechanical, not a natural sound.

Dear Mr. President of the United States,
My name is Mr. . I live in
AZ, I go to school at
Elementary School. My teacher is Mrs.
in 5th grade. The best thing that makes
my school more excellent is the teachers,
staff, students, substitutes, the office employees, and
the principal. The teachers teach you
everything. They teach you math, social studies,
science, reading and writing. The staff (aids) help
you when you get hurt. They take
extremely good care of you. The students
are excellent, honest A+ peacebuilders. They
are very pleasant and agreeable students.
The substitutes help when the teachers
are gone and do a kindly job.
The next people are the office employees.
They do a humongous job. And keeping
things organized. And also keeping
a smile on everyday. And the last
person I'm going to recognize is the
principal. She is the most fantastic principal.
She is very kind to the students.
Well, it's a very neat school. I'm an

so delighted that you chosed to come
 to Elementary. You should come its
 a wonderful school. When you come you
 will have the most humorous day.
 Then again c'm so glad you chosed
 Elementary. You should come
 its a wonderful school. When you
 come you will have the most humou-
 day. Then again thank you c'm sa
 glad you chosed to come to
 Elementary.

Sincerely,
 The

The response has adequate idea development and a clear and coherent presentation, although it begins to wander at the end. The structure is a bit formulaic, but it is easy to follow. Both a beginning and an ending are present and effective. Words are functional and, at times, the writer attempts to use more colorful language: “excellent, honest A+ peacebuilders,” “pleasant and agreeable students,” “substitutes . . . do a kindly job,” and “a smile on everyday.” Sentences are somewhat varied with control of simple constructions. Some words are used incorrectly, (a very neatly school) and conventions do need attention, but the errors do not impede readability. (The repeated paragraph at the end can be ignored as it is an incident of a recopying error.)

The response is not a 3 because it clearly presents ideas with relevant details. The response is not a 5 because it lacks an inviting beginning, the topic exploration is not thorough, and sentences lack variety.

The President of the United States is coming to our school. He has been told that our school is very special and he wants to know why. I told him that it's special because it's clean, organized, and a good learning place.

Our school is very clean because our janitors are very good at cleaning up messes. When somebody spills a drink or some food, the janitors are always there to wipe it up. The bathrooms and classrooms are constantly tidy and neat because of the janitors.

Another reason why our school is special is because it is organized. Our principal has a certain way we do things. In a fire drill, lockdown, or a bomb threat, we get out of the school then go to the little kids playground and get into number order. Our office is also organized. When you have a question they immediately have an answer.

The last reason our school is so special is because it's a great

learning place we have wonderful teachers that help us understand things better. They aren't strict but they don't goof off and get down to business.

So there you go Mr. President. That is why our school is so special. It's organized, clean, and a great learning place.

The response is clear, focused, and controlled. While the organization is a bit formulaic in a five-paragraph style, the balanced and thorough exploration of the topic offsets the less than inviting beginning and repeating the same information in the ending. Relevant details are offered in each paragraph: "When somebody spills a drink or some food, the janitors are always there to wipe it up." "In a fire drill, lockdown, or bomb threat, we get out of the school then go to the little kids playground and get in number order." "We have wonderful teachers that help us understand things better." Carefully chosen words and phrases are crafted into varied sentences that show commitment to the topic. "Our office is also organized. When you have a question they immediately have an answer." Conventions are effective and nearly always correct.

The response is not a 4 because it is clear, focused, and has control. The response is not a 6 because it lacks a creative beginning and is not particularly insightful.

Our school is special in many ways. There are countless people who are nice to you and help you. There are monitors, crossing guards, teachers, parent helpers, Assistant Principal and the Principal just to name a few.

We also do some fun contests. A very entertaining one is called the Turkey Calling Contest. You try to sound like a turkey and if you do, you can win a toy turkey. The Student Council has a car wash to earn money for our school. We also do Giftwrap in the beginning of the year and if you sell alot, you can win some cool prizes.

School is also alot of fun. Some people think it's not, but it really is. We have recess and games to play. We also do cool activities to help us learn. After recess, we have lots of learning to do.

Next we go eat lunch. You can bring your own lunch or, you can buy one from the cafeteria. The lunch ladies are really nice to you and don't give you foods that you don't like if you ask them nicely.

We also have alot of different classes we go to but, we only go to a class once a week. We go to Library, Physical Education, Art, Computers, D.A.R.E., Music and in 5th grade you do Sex Ed.

The teachers are really likeable and don't yell at you or even raise their voices. They understand everyone's problems and help you understand what she is teaching. They also help you work better in groups.

We have a marvelous playground that is fun to play on at recess. We get to have two recesses a day! During that time, you get to play games with your friends. I love to do the monkey bars, but there are millions of other games to play!

I hope you will like it when you come!

The writer demonstrates clarity, focus, and control in this in-depth exploration of the topic. The beginning is strong; the conclusion is appropriate for a letter and shows intentional interaction with the reader. The rich, credible details show commitment to the topic. "You try to sound like a turkey and if you do, you can win a toy turkey!" "The lunch ladies are really nice to you and don't give you food you don't like if you ask them nicely." "The teachers are really likeable and don't yell at you or even raise their voices." "I love to do the monkey bars, but there are millions of other games to play!" The sequencing runs into a bit of trouble in paragraphs 3 and 7, which probably should be combined. However, the sentences are varied and enhance meaning throughout. "We get to have two recesses a day! During that time, you get to play games with your friends." Conventions are well done.

The response is not a 5 because of the in-depth exploration of the topic and the committed interaction between the reader and the writer.